

could verify his story, said Peter Muello, an Associated Press writer in 1995.

Shortly after that initial report, a British man told authorities he had found the plane, and even reported the aircraft's correct identification number, said Muello.

The Leitch family never heard about either of these sightings.

A letter to Leitch's parents from a Brazilian official, dated July 14, 1944, said American authorities were searching "where the plane is supposed to have made a forced landing."

Five years later, Leitch's mother contacted a U.S. vice-consul in Belem, who told her that tribes in the area were friendly, and if anything had been found, they would have contacted the Brazilian authorities.

During that same time year (1949), the Los Angeles Times reported that the U.S. Adjutant General's Office issued the statement that "no evidence has been submitted that any of the crew parachuted to the safety, nor has any indication been received that the men were found by natives."

"Any that was all we heard," said Leitch. "My mother went to her grave believing her John was still alive, somewhere in the jungle," he said.

After these reports, no official statements about 42-95064 were made until 1995, when Brazilian army authorities said their 3rd Jungle Infantry Battalion discovered the wreckage in August 1994 and brought back "a leather artifact" that one official said was probably part of a crewmember's flight jacket.

But in December 1994, a joint search party mounted by Brazil's air force and the U.S. Embassy to Brazil failed to find the site.

Finally, officials confirmed the site; and on Independence Day, 1995, a 15-man salvage team from the U.S. Army Central Identification Laboratory arrived in Brazil to join a Brazilian army expedition to travel to the site and recover anything that was left.

"BRING THE BOYS BACK HOME"

When millions of Americans sang along with war-era stars like Vera Lynn and Glenn Miller, hoping that "We Will Meet Again" and praying to "Bring The Boys Back Home," few would dream their government and their tax dollars would still be busy trying to do exactly that, more than 50 years later.

Thanks to the ongoing mission of the Army Central Identification Laboratory in Hawaii (CILHI), many missing servicemen—especially from Vietnam—have been positively identified from even the smallest of remains, after a process involving long hours of scientific analysis.

Apparently, that's where 42-95064's crew has been since the summer of 1995, while U.S. Army officials attempted to track down next-of-kin for each man.

An FAB (Brazilian air force) team prepared the site, and assisted the CILHI researchers during a three-week recovery effort in a dense jungle area some 50 miles northeast of the Amazon River city of Macapá, located about 250 miles northwest of the plane's destination, Belém.

Searchers found two sets of "dog tags" and numerous bone fragments at the site, said Johnie Webb, a CILHI civilian deputy commander.

"It is, very dense jungle," he said, adding that "all 10 (crewmen) perished in the aircraft."

Two weeks of digging at the crash site brought nothing, Leitch said officials told him.

"They had dug several meters deep and were starting to lose hope, when suddenly, they started finding bones, rings, necklaces and dog tags with names and ranks written

on them," said Fernando Allegretti, a spokesman for the Brazilian state of Amapá, where the plane crashed.

One investigator found a wallet, and another found several 1944 dollar bills, he said.

The high-speed impact of the crash meant little was left of the aircraft, and most of it—spread over a wide area and undisturbed for 51 years—will never be recovered, officials said.

After three weeks, the team recovered the remains of all 10 on board.

Officials then held a memorial service for the crew at Macapá, capital city of Amapá.

A short time later, CILHI forensics experts confirmed the remains were, indeed, those of the long-lost crew of 42-95064.

#### GIVE THEM PEACE

After more than two-and-a-half years of attempting to find surviving relatives of the crew, the U.S. Army has apparently decided against returning the remains to the families.

"I made call after call" to the authorities, said Leitch after hearing of the plane's discovery in 1995.

"I was told they were going to use a DNA process to identify each man," he said.

"We wanted him (John) buried out here in Los Angeles, with my parents."

Leitch said the family has kept a burial plot for John all these years.

However, last month's announcement of plans for the Feb. 20 group burial in Arlington put an end to each family's own hopes for closure.

Army officials apparently identified Peggy Bowling, a Williamsburg woman who is Smith's first cousin, as Smith's closest living relative.

Bowling and another Whitley County resident are expected to attend the Feb. 20 ceremony.

Leitch said the government is arranging to fly family members to Washington for the event.

The 42-95064's crew included:

2nd Lt. Edward I. Bares, pilot, Chicago; Flight Officer Robert W. Pearman, co-pilot, Miami; Flight Officer Laurel Stevens, bombardier, Monroe, Iowa; 1st Lt. Floyd D. Kyte Jr., navigator, Elmira, N.Y.; Sgt. John Rocasey, nose gunner, El Monte, Cal.; Staff Sgt. John E. Leitch, engineer, Los Angeles; Sgt. Michael Prasol, tail gunner, Northampton, Mass.; Sgt. Herman Smith, ball turret gunner, Williamsburg, Ky.; Sgt. Max C. McGilvrey, upper gunner, Perkins, Okla.; and Staff Sgt. Harry N. Furman, unknown replacement, Dayton Plains, Mich.

Furman, not part of the plane's original crew, replaced the crew's radio operator. Staff Sgt. Abe Shepherd of Ohio, on the fateful flight

"It is likely that the ground crew chief may well have replaced one of the gunners, who would have gone by sea," said Kevin Welch, a B-24 veteran.

"Occasionally, some positions were manned by non-crew members," said John Jakab, another B-24 veteran.

For example, he said, "my co-pilot crossed over by ship. My co-pilot for the overseas flight was our unit operations officer."

Shepherd's fate is not known—and, after all these years, there aren't that many people still around who remember the lost crew of 42-95064.

But some will never forget them.

"I have mixed feelings" about the upcoming ceremony, said Leitch.

The Leitch brothers, born 17 months apart, "used to double date" in their young days in southern California, he said.

"I'm happy that it's coming to a close, but I really miss him. It still bothers me."

#### UNABLE TO ATTEND ROLLCALL VOTE

### HON. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 1998

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I regret that due to unforeseen circumstances I was unable to vote on H. Res. 352 (Rollcall No. 12). If I had been present, I would have voted "Aye".

#### TWO YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE TELECOMMUNICATIONS ACT OF 1996

### HON. SUE MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 12, 1998

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the Federal Communications Commission on their newly demonstrated spirit of cooperation as they continue to implement the Telecommunications Act of 1996.

We are beginning to see the spirit of the new faces on that Commission. There is no question that the new members of the FCC have a lot of work to do—particularly as they work through what their predecessors started in the process which will allow local phone companies into the long distance market.

Until just recently, the 14-point check list, designed to ease the long distance entry process, has been a constant source of confinement for local service providers. They have been forced into the courts to seek refuge. The courts have ruled in favor of the local companies.

After such a long string of slanted rulings, clearly issued in defiance of the will of this Congress, I am pleased to see that the FCC is singing a new tune. I look forward to seeing those new words develop into new actions—actions that will fulfill the 2 year old promise of lower prices and more choices for American consumers.

#### 1998 CONGRESSIONAL OBSERVANCE OF BLACK HISTORY MONTH

SPEECH OF

### HON. WILLIAM J. COYNE

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 11, 1998

Mr. COYNE. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in this special order celebrating Black History Month. I would like to express my appreciation to Representatives LOUIS STOKES and MAXINE WATERS for organizing this special order, which provides the Members of the House with an important opportunity to participate in Black History Month.

The United States has officially commemorated Black History Month and its predecessors can be traced back an additional 50 years to 1926, when Dr. Carter G. Woodson, a prominent educator, historian and author, created Negro History Week. Since then, each February has been a time when Americans are called upon to educate themselves about